

HONORING THE EXEMPLARY CITIZENRY OF JIMMY TOUSSAINT AND ELI BINDER

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues the outstanding example of honesty and civic responsibility demonstrated by two young men from my district, Mr. Jimmy Toussaint and Mr. Eli Binder.

While walking through their neighborhood, Jimmy, who is eleven years old, and Eli, who is twelve, noticed that a neighbor, having left in a rush, neglected to close and lock the front door to his home.

They could have kept on walking, but they felt a responsibility to the welfare of their neighbor. After knocking but receiving no response, Jimmy and Eli sought out the assistance of an adult Citizens on Patrol volunteer and informed him that the homeowner had neglected to secure his home. The volunteer locked the door and notified the grateful homeowner, Mr. Bruce Hamerstrom.

These young people have demonstrated an important part of what makes a community: neighbors looking after neighbors. I congratulate Jimmy and Eli for their good sense and judgement. I know that their parents must be proud of them, as are we all.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD L. MAYBERRY

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, we rise today to pay tribute to one of Sacramento's most respected and effective labor leaders, Mr. Richard L. Mayberry. This evening, Mr. Mayberry's many friends and colleagues will commemorate the conclusion of his tenure as an officer with the Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522.

"Dick" Mayberry has been affiliated with the Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522 for 26 years. He has served as an Area Director, Vice President, and, for the past twelve years, he has held the post of President.

A native of Sacramento, California, Dick Mayberry is a veteran of the United States Army and the father of two. He joined the Sacramento Fire Department in 1964 after serving one year as a correctional officer.

Mr. Mayberry's leadership abilities allowed him to achieve the rank of Apparatus Operator in 1975, three years after he first became an officer in the Sacramento Area Fire Fighters Local 522.

In 1985, Dick Mayberry assumed the presidency of Local 522 and quickly established himself as one of our community's most influential champions of labor. This position soon led him to a variety of other important labor and civic posts.

Among these, Mr. Mayberry was a Sacramento County Civil Service Commissioner from 1984 to 1994, chairing that important body for two terms. He has also been a mem-

ber of the Industrial Relations Association of Northern California for thirteen years, serving as an officer for two terms.

Since 1985, he has been Vice President of the Public Employee Council and an Executive Board Member with the Sacramento Central Labor Council, our city's most prominent representative labor body. Mr. Mayberry's other notable labor positions include the chairmanship of the Board of Publishers of the Sacramento Labor Bulletin and membership in the International Association of Fire Fighters.

Mr. Mayberry has been most forceful in his capacity as the chief negotiator for the City of Sacramento's fire fighters. In performing this key duty, with the pay, benefits, and working conditions of his membership hanging in the balance, Mr. Mayberry achieved his reputation for professional excellence.

In 1995, he retired from active service with the Sacramento Fire Department, but that did not preclude him from passing on his occupational expertise to other fire fighters. In this regard, he has worked as a member of the California State Board of Fire Services since 1996.

Dick Mayberry's unique labor and fire fighting background has led him to represent our community's fire fighters before the Civil Service Commission regarding examinations, classification, and disciplinary matters. He has also attained a strong grasp of the issues involving the merger, consolidation, and reorganization of fire districts.

Mr. Speaker, Dick Mayberry has led a remarkable career in Northern California. He has come to personify integrity and drive in Sacramento's labor community. We ask all of our colleagues to join us in saluting his 26 year record of achievement with the Sacramento Area Local Fire Fighters.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK MARTINEZ PORTUSACH

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, the island of Guam mourns the passing of one of its most respected and dedicated leaders. Frank Martinez Portusach, the former mayor of the village of Agana Heights, was called to his eternal rest of December 26, 1996 at the age of 76. He leaves behind his wife, the former Ms. Virginia Hughes and his children Thelma, Frances, Frank, Jane John and Deanna.

Mayor Portusach was an accomplished artist and craftsman, a Merchant Marine Engineering officer, a businessman, and a senior island politician. This man, known throughout the island for his seemingly inexhaustible energy, ushered the transformation of Agana Heights from a village lined with dirt roads, lacking sewer lines, and devoid of community facilities into a model island village with the lowest crime rate, the finest streets, and one of Guam's most extensive community activity programs.

Born in 1921 to Concepcion Portusach Lorenzo and Henry Sakakibara, Mayor Portusach received formal education from several institutions including the Guam High School, U.S. Naval Correspondence School, and the Marine Engineering School under the

Department of the Navy. After retiring from the United States Merchant Marines, he started a local business in 1967. He began his political career in 1976, back when mayors were known as village commissioners. Mayor Portusach received an appointment from former Governor Ricky Bordallo as commissioner for the village of Agana Heights. It was at this post that he became so loved and respected by the island's civilian and military communities.

In addition to his efforts towards having village streets paved and in the development of community activities, he is also credited for the construction of waterlines, installation of streetlights, and renovation of village schools. Through his efforts, Agana Heights became the first village on Guam to have mail received through home delivery service. This was made possible by a detailed village map personally drafted by Mayor Portusach. The Department of Land Management has since included this map in their official records.

However, Mayor Portusach's most prominent and lasting achievement is probably the institution of the Sister Village Program. He really took great pride in his ability to work well with the military community. After hearing about friction between the military and local communities several decades ago, he started the program wherein Guam villages "adopted" local military commands fostering friendship and cooperation. This has resulted in tremendous mutual benefits for service members and the local community.

In recognition of his achievements, he was presented a host of awards and commendations. Among these are several notable and distinct honors. This includes being named an honorary Seabee, an honorary captain in the Police Reserve, and an honorary Commodore in the United States Navy.

The late Honorable Frank Martinez Portusach left a legacy of service and devotion to the village of Agana Heights, the island of Guam, its people and the United States. It is with a sense of great loss that I pay tribute to this distinguished local leader. His perseverance and energy will forever live in the hearts of his constituents. May his lifelong commitment to the village of Agana Heights and the island forever inspire us.

On behalf of the people of Guam, I offer my condolences and join his widow, children, and grandchildren in mourning the loss of a husband, a father, and a fellow servant to the people of Guam.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE PENSION PORTABILITY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation which addresses an extremely important issue—pension portability. Today, there are 51 million American workers with no pension plan and there are many others who lose their pensions when they change jobs. Our society is ever changing and one of these changes is job mobility. It is much more common for individuals to have several jobs than in the past.

Unfortunately, when individuals change jobs, they are not able to continue the same level of pension benefits. This fact is especially true if the individual's pension plan is a defined benefit plan. Today, I am introducing legislation which takes steps towards improving pension portability upon employment separation. The legislation improves pension portability for both defined benefit and defined contribution plans.

For defined contribution plans, the legislation reduces the current vesting period of five years for employer contributions to three years. For both defined benefit plans and defined contribution plans, the legislation requires the employer to offer the employee the option of receiving a lump sum distribution to an individual retirement account (IRA). The employer has to make this offer to the employee within 90 days of termination of employment. The employee does not have to take this option because in some situations this would not be the best option for the employee.

The lump sum would be directly transferred to an IRA. These funds would be subject to a higher penalty than the current law penalty of 10 percent for withdrawals made prior to the taxpayer reaching age 59½. Withdrawals would be subject to a 25 percent penalty for the first two years and then it would be 10 percent. These penalties are the same penalties as for simple IRAs. The 10 percent penalty would be waived for the three allowable purposes under current law which are first time purchase of a home, costs of higher education, and medical expenses.

The legislation waives the 10 percent penalty for withdrawals made before age 59½ for individuals who have received 12 weeks of unemployment compensation. This provision is to help those who have lost their job and need to use their retirement savings to make ends meet during difficult financial times.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH PICCONE,
UNICO HONOREE OF THE YEAR

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to put a face and a name to the spirit that embodies one of the strengths of our country: community involvement. Community involvement that stems from a life of dedication and determination. It is a distinct privilege to extend my congratulations to Joe Piccone, Unico Honoree of the Year.

For many, Joe represents the optimum response to the question "What could be?". A child from Civitella, Joe created success in the United States in part due to the strength provided by his culture and customs, and his actions have served to improve the environment and the lives of others. It is fitting that such an outstanding organization recognize the example Joe Piccone sets for commitment to excellence. Sharing Joe's Italian heritage, I am extremely proud to call the honoree a friend and greatly appreciate having this opportunity to express my sincere respect for him.

Businessman, husband and father, or friend; Joe brings an enthusiasm that underscores the importance of engaging yourself in life

even with regard to the most ordinary, everyday occurrences. Joe's life illustrates the profound effects that result from love and perseverance. Joe, I salute your most recent accomplishment and offer my best wishes to you and your family for continued success.

TAIWAN STANDS TALL
FINANCIALLY AND POLITICALLY

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, during the January recess I had an opportunity to visit the Republic of China on Taiwan. I met with President Lee Teng-hui, Foreign Minister Jason Hu, and other leaders. We discussed a number of interesting issues.

One issue was the current financial turmoil affecting Asia. It is interesting to note that Taiwan, so far, has remained relatively unscathed and has stood out as one of the few strong Asian economies. It has close to \$90 billion of foreign currency deposits. Its banking sector is not as exposed as other economies to real estate and stock market speculation. Its currency has depreciated 20 percent against the dollar but will remain stable.

The Taiwan economic miracle has shown resilience and dynamism during the past months of Asian meltdown. The economic growth rate for Taiwan in 1997 reached 6.72 percent, the highest in 5 years. Taiwan's economic vitality can also be seen in its low foreign debts. Its total foreign debt amounts to less than \$100 million.

Taiwan's economic stability stemmed mainly from sound planning for strong growth and development, financial reform, economic liberalization, and the acceleration of privatization.

The Financial Times of London and the Asian Wall Street Journal recently described Taiwan as the "Switzerland of the Orient." Such accolades about Taiwan speak volumes about the strength and vitality of Taiwan's economy and Taiwan's potential to become a full-fledged developed economy by the turn of the century.

President Lee, Foreign Minister Hu and I also discussed Taiwan's relations with the mainland. Taipei has reiterated its "three nos" and "three musts" policies toward the Chinese mainland. The "three nos" refer to no Taiwan independence, no hasty unification and no confrontation. The "three musts" are the maintenance of peace, the continuation of exchanges and the search for a win-win situation that benefits both Taiwan and the mainland.

Foreign Minister Hu told me that Taipei and Peking must learn to treat each other with respect and work toward collective cooperation. Taipei has always kept its door open for negotiating with Peking and that cross-strait talks should be resumed as soon as possible.

Foreign Minister Hu, the former ROC representative in Washington, is young and energetic. During the last three months as his nation's top diplomat, he has traveled to Africa, consolidated friendship and relations for his country worldwide. In my conversations with him, he discussed the importance of Taiwan-US relations.

Minister Hu reminded me that Taipei has no intention of interfering with the development of

US-PRC relations and that Taipei hopes that the US will abide by the Taiwan Relations Act and its regulations regarding arms sales to Taipei. Moreover, he hopes that the US will not change its consistent position on the sovereignty of Taiwan, since the US has never recognized that the PRC enjoys sovereignty over Taiwan.

Minister Hu also drew my attention to the trade relations between Taipei and the US. Citing Taiwan's purchase of American agricultural exports as one example of the strong trade relations between the two countries, he mentioned Taiwan is the fifth largest market for American agricultural exports. In 1996 Taiwan's imports of American agricultural products were US\$2.9 billion; by contrast, the PRC is the seventh largest market for American agricultural exports. Taiwan, in fact, is one of the most important markets for US goods.

Apart from strong trade relations between Taiwan and the US, Minister Hu stressed that the peoples of Taiwan and the United States share the same system of values. Taiwan's democratization has gained recognition from the American public and he hopes that the United States will continue to treat both Taiwan and the Chinese mainland fairly and make efforts for Taiwan and the mainland to settle the reunification issue peacefully.

I was very impressed with Taiwan's financial and political development. And Mr. Speaker, a little history is in order as well. You know, Taiwan is one of the best friends America has ever had. Back during the Cold War, we in America really didn't have a more steadfast ally in our struggle against Communism than the people of Taiwan.

They were integral in stopping the spread of that deadly system in Asia, and for that we owe them a debt of gratitude.

And with the successive free elections over the past few years, the obvious respect for human rights that is evidenced there, and the good neighborly policy they follow in foreign affairs, it is obvious to all honest and well-meaning people that the Republic of China on Taiwan, and not the Communist dictatorship in Beijing, represents the correct model for the future of Chinese civilization. This will remain true no matter what kind of reforms the regime in Beijing attempts, and no matter what kind of policy the West pursues vis-à-vis that regime, as long as the Communists remain in power.

Mr. Speaker, after my trip, I am more convinced than ever that Taiwan is one of the few true democracies in Asia worthy of our support.

TRIBUTE TO EDUARDO PALACIOS

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 1998

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to my good friend Eduardo Palacios, who for 27 years has been a bona fide hero to hundreds if not thousands of immigrants in the San Fernando Valley. In 1971, Eduardo started an immigrant rights and resource clinic in a tiny one-room office in the City of San Fernando. Today these kinds of centers are common, but that wasn't the case in the early 1970s.

Eduardo was motivated by the humanitarian concerns and a strong sense of Chicano